



May 3, 2024  
The Honorable Pete Buttigieg  
Secretary  
United States Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Avenue SE  
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Buttigieg,

The Center for Neighborhood Technology (CNT) is writing in support of IDOT's applications for the Multimodal Project Discretionary Grant Opportunity (MPDG) and Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements (CRISI) Programs funding on behalf of the Chicago Region Environmental and Transportation Efficiency (CREATE) Program. These grants will fund the first segment of the Belt Junction and 80th Street Junction Replacements project, known as EW2a. The project includes reconfiguring the Belt Railway Company (BRC) main tracks between the Dan Ryan Expressway and Belt Junction where four freight railroad tracks intersect with each other and Metra's SouthWest Service operations.

Freight truck traffic is a major health and safety hazard to Chicago's neighborhoods. CNT's recent [Chicago Truck Count Data Portal](#) developed with the Little Village Environmental Justice Organization shows the massive scale of truck activity some of Chicago's Black and Brown neighborhoods face. CNT sees the clean, safe transportation of goods by rail as part of a sustainable decarbonization of our freight network. The current freight rail infrastructure in Chicago also creates bottlenecks for clean passenger rail and federal infrastructure funding is vital to enabling reliable, accessible low-carbon transportation options.

CNT supports this application and looks forward to continuing to engage with the U.S. DOT and IDOT as we work with Chicago's community based organizations towards a just transition of our freight network.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jen McGraw", is written over a light-colored rectangular background.

Jen McGraw  
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Center for Neighborhood Technology  
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